

Not All Alien Invaders Are From Outer Space

Somewhere out there, in a remote part of
the world, a creature waits...

The Unknown Invader
Scaryus eatumpis



The Unknown Invader, *Scaryus eatumupis*

The Unknown Invader is the worst of its kind. Somewhere out there, in a remote part of the world, a creature waits. It could be a bug, a plant, an animal, even a disease. Whatever it is, it is hungry, and it is looking toward America. It dreams of spreading disease among our healthy livestock and licks its chops just thinking of our bountiful crops. As long as it just dreams, however, we are safe.

Over the past 200 years, several thousand foreign plant and animal species have become established in the United States. About one in seven has become invasive, pushing aside native species. An invasive species is defined as a foreign species whose introduction does, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental

harm or harm to human health. Invasive plants, animals, and aquatic organisms have significantly reduced the economic productivity and ecological balance of U.S. agriculture and natural resources. Invasive organisms, like the Unknown Invader, are always on the move.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) works 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure that the dreams of the Unknown Invader don't become reality. APHIS inspectors scour incoming shipments

for the very clever Unknown Invader. It will cower in crates, mope in machines, and snuggle in ships. It can hide inside fruits, vegetables, and meat. Sometimes, it can even convince people to carry it across the border in their coat pockets. But every time, the Unknown Invader must hide from APHIS inspectors, who diligently watch day and night, safeguarding America's agricultural resources and allowing the movement of commodities in the global marketplace—without hitchhiking pests and diseases.

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